

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 ACDA-12 /084 W
-----069273 280304Z /64

R 271045Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7913
INFO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
CINCPAC HONOLULU
JCS WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 DACCA 0599

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM MILI OVIP BG
SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF VISIT TO BANGLADESH BY ADMIRAL MAURICE
F. WEISNER, CINCPAC

REF: DACCA 0583

SUMMARY. THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF PACIFIC (CINCPAC),
ADMIRAL WEISNER, AND PARTY VISITED BANGLADESH FROM
JAN. 23-26. DURING VISIT CINCPAC MET PRESIDENT ZIA,
THE OPERATING HEADS OF THE MILITARY SERVICES AND THE
DEFENSE AND FOREIGN SECRETARIES. MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED
INCLUDED THE STATUS AND NEEDS OF THE BANGLADESH MILITARY,
BANGLADESH RELATIONS WITH INDIA, AND SUPERPOWER PRESENCE
IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE VISIT SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO
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CORDIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND THE
U.SM END SUMMARY.

1. THE COMMANDER IN CHEIF PACIFIC, ADMIRAL MAURICE
F. WEISNER, VISITED BANGLADESH FROM JAN. 23-26. MEMBERS
OF CINCPAC'S PARTY INCLUDED MR. LEO J MOSER, POLITICAL
ADVISOR, BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN B. MARKS, J2(INTELLIGENCE)

AND REAR ADMIRAL A S MOREAU, JR., ALL OF CINCPAC HEADQUARTERS. DURING COURSE OF VISIT, ADMIRAL WEISNER HELD MEETINGS WITH THE PRESIDENT, MAJOR GENERAL ZIAUR RAHMAN; THE CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF, REAR ADMIRAL M H KHAN; THE CHIEF OF AIR STAFF AIR COMMODOR SADRUDDIN; THE DEPUTY CHIEF ARMY STAFF, JAMOR GENERAL H M ERSHAD; AND THE SECRETARIES OF THE DEFENSE (FAIZUDDIN AHMED) AND FOREIGN MINISTER (TABARAK HUSSAIN), (REFTEL REPORTS THE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S

BRIEFING OF CINCPAC AND PARTY). THE ADMIRAL ALSO VISITED BANGLADESH NAVAL HEADQUARTERS FOR A BRIEFING AND DISCUSSIONS WITH NAVAL OFFICERS ASSIGNED TO THE DACCA AREA AND TOURED AND HAD LUNCH AT THE BANGLADESH DEFENCE SERVICES COMM AND STAFF COLLEGE. DURING MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES, THE ADMIRAL WAS ABLE TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT STATUS AND NEEDS OF THE BANGLADESHI ARMED SERVICES, THE UNITED STATES-SOVIET UNION TALKS CONCERNING THE INDIAN OCEAN, AND CURRENTLY BANGLADESH-INDIAN RELATIONS.

2. ADMIRAL WEISNER AND PARTY WERE WELL RECEIVED THROUGHOUT THE TRIP AND BDG ARRANGEMENTS WERE EXCELLENT. PRESS COVERAGE WAS SPARSE, WITH A SINGLE SHORT ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE FRONT PAGES OF MOST DAILY NEWSPAPERS THE DAY OF HIS ARRIVAL (23 JAN.) AND A PICTURE OF THE ADMIRAL DURING HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CONFIDENTIAL

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ZIA ON THE FRONT PAGE OF SOME PAPERS ON 26 JAN. (COMMENT: WE DID NOT ISSUE A PRESS RELEASE AND DIDN OT SEEK EXTENSIVE COVERAGE.)

3. DURING THE ADMIRAL'S MEETINGS AND VISITS, DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS;
(A) THE NEEDS OF THE BANGLADESHI MILITARY SERVICES: THE BANGLADESHI EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE IMET TRAINING PROGRAM BEGUN IN FY 77. THE BANGLADESHIS WOULD LIKE TO PROGRAM INCREASED BEYOND THE \$200,000 MADE AVAILABLE FOR FY 78, UNDER WHICH 23 MILITARY MEMBERS ARE SCHEDULED TO ATTEND SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES. THE ADMIRAL MENTIONED THERE IS SOME HOPE FOR A SLIGHT INCREASE IN FUNDS NEXT YEAR. (COMMENT: WE HAVE LEARNED THE FY 79 APPROPRIATION FOR BANGLADESH WILL PROBABLY BE \$250,000, BUT HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED CLEARANCE TO INFORM THE BANGLADESHIS.) THE OPERATING HEAD OF THE BANGLADESH SERVICES ALSO ASKED CINCPAC WHETHER THE UNITED STATES MIGHT PROVIDE ITEMS TO SUPPORT THEIR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS, SUCH AS TRAINING AIDS AND LITERATURE, AND EXCESS OR READY-TO-BE DISCARDED EQUIPMENT WHICH MIGHT BE USED BY STUDENTS DURING

PRACTICAL EXERCISES. THE CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF AND THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE ARMY STAFF BOTH ASKED WHETHER SOME OF THEIR OFFICERS MIGHT ATTEND MANEUVERS IN THE CINCPAC AREA AS OBSERVERS. THERE WERE SEVERAL REQUESTS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF TRAINING. THESE INQUIRIES WILL BE FOLLOWED UP THROUGH IMET CHANNELS.

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(B) CURRENT STATUS OF THE MILITARY: THE OPERATING HEADS OF THE SERVICES PORTRAYED THEIR FORCES AS NEWLY ORGANIZED, UNDER-FINANCED, AND UNDER-EQUIPPED BUT PROFESSIONALLY ORIENTED, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF PROVIDING A DETERRENT AGAINST INTERVENTION BY ANY REGIONAL POWER (READ INDIA). ADMIRAL WEISNER SEEMED IMPRESSED BY THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE OFFICERS HE MET REGARDED THEIR DUTIES AND BY THE NUMBER OF BRIGHT YOUNGER OFFICERS AMONG THOSE HE MET. EACH TIME CONVERSATIONS TURNED TO WAYS THE UNITED STATES MIGHT ASSIST BANGLADESH MILITARILY, THE ADMIRAL EXPRESSED PRESIDENT CARTER'S DETERMINATION TO LIMIT ARMS TRANSFERS

AND STATED THAT IN ANY CASE APPROACHES TO THE U.S.
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CONCERNING MILITARY ASSISTANCE MUST BE MADE THROUGH
STATE DEPARTMENT CHANNELS.

(C) RELATIONS WITH INDIA: SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS WITH
WHOM CINCPAC MET ALLUDED TO THE GENERALLY IMPROVED
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDIA AND HER NEIGHBORS. ALL
WERE CONSCIOUS, HOWEVER, OF THE POSSIBLE IMPERMANENCE
OF CURRENT RELATIONSHIPS. SOME EXPRESSED SUSPICION
THAT INDIA WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN PREEMINENCE
THROUGH IN LESS DIRECT WAYS THAN UNDER MRS GANDHI.

(D) SUPERPOWER PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN: THIS
SUBJECT CAME UP SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE VISIT,
PARTICULARLY DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH THE CHIEF OF
NAVAL STAFF, CHIEF OF AIR STAFF AND THE DEFENSE
IMPRESSION FROM BANGLADESHIS WAS THAT WHILE THEY
WOULD LIKE TO SEE A DIMINUTION OF SUPERPOWER RIVALRY
IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND A TRUCE ZONE OF PEACE
ESTABLISHED THERE, THEY RECOGNIZE THAT IF THE
UNITED STATES WERE TO WITHDRAW ENTIRELY FROM THE AREA,
THE SOVIET UNION WOULD PROBABLY NOT FOLLOW SUIT AND
THAT, IF UNDER SOME FAR-FETCHED SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES,
BOTH SUPERPOWERS WITHDREW, INDIAN PREEMINENCE RATHER
THAN NATIONAL EQUALITY WOULD CHARACTERIZE THE
RESULTING SITUATION.

4. THE EMBASSY REGARDS ADMIRAL WEISNER'S VISIT AS
VERY USEFUL, PARTICULARLY IN BROADENING AND DEEPENDING
OUR CONTACTS WITH BANGLADESHI MILITARY PERSONNEL.
THE BANGLADESHIS ALSO APPEARED PLEASED TO HOST AND
SPEAK DIRECTLY AND AT LENGTH WITH A SENIOR
UNITED STATES MILITARY COMMANDER. WHILE UNDERSTANDING
THE PURPOSE OF THE ADMIRAL'S VISIT WAS AN AREA
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ORIENTATION, THE BANGLADESHIS COULD NOT BUT VALUE
THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A SENIOR AMERICAN MILITARY
OFFICIAL - IN BANGLADESH - AWARE OF THEIR CURRENT
MILITARY STATUS AND NEEDS. THE ADMIRAL, WHILE
PROJECTING AN APPRECIATION OF THOSE NEEDS, SOUGHT TO
MAKE CLEAR THAT THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT THE
UNITED STATES WILL TAKE SUBSTANTIAL MEASURES TO
SATISFY THEM. THE VISIT, HOWEVER, DID SERVE THE

PURPOSE OF PROMOTING CORDIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN
BANGLADESH AND THE UNITED STATES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISARMAMENT, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MILITARY VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DACCA00599
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780042-0040
Format: TEL
From: DACCA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780115/aaaaamqd.tel
Line Count: 227
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a7b470df-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DACCA 583
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3703301
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HIGHLIGHTS OF VISIT TO BANGLADESH BY ADMIRAL MAURICE F. WEISNER, CINCPAC
TAGS: PARM, MILI, OVIP, BG, CINCPAC, (WEISNER, MAURICE F)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a7b470df-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014